

### REMARKS

The applicant's counsel wishes to thank the Examiner for the opportunity to consult with the Examiner during a telephonic interview on September 22, 2003. During the interview, the Duraflex, Lerra, and Birchmire references were discussed, along with reference no. 33 from the Applicant's May 20, 2003 Information Disclosure Statement. The Examiner agreed that the draft claims submitted during the interview were allowable over the references cited in the July 2, 2003 office action, but indicated that a follow up search would be necessary.

Applicant's counsel discussed copending U.S. application serial No. 09/541,297, which also features lanyards invented by the Applicants. In addition, copending U.S. application serial No. 09/931,658, which is a continuation-in-part thereof, relates to lanyard connectors illustrated and discussed in the present application.

New claims 24-33 correspond to the claims submitted to the Examiner during the interview, with the exception of four minor typographical errors that have been corrected herein. More specifically, the word "and" was added to line 8 of claim 24 and line 8 of claim 32 and the word [and] was deleted from line 18 of claim 32. The word "first" on line 7 of claim 33 was replaced with the phrase "female buckle". Claims 34-45 were added after the interview.

As discussed during the interview, the subject matter claimed by the new claims is not anticipated or obviated by the prior art. For example, the addition of language relating to a neck configured to be disposed within and couple to a portion of an attachment distinguishes the claims from the cited art.

In view of the discussion and amendments submitted herein, the Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending claims is now in condition for allowance. In the event that the

Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that can be clarified by a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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